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Q Echoes from the Q
Sabine Farm



by
Eugene and Roswell Martin Field



A. C. McClurg and Company
Chicago
M. d. ccc. xciii



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*Five Hundred Copies of this edition of ECHOES FROM
THE SABINE FARM have been printed,
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"Those paraphrases would just suit me!" said my friend. "By all means let me have them, and I will publish them in attractive style, — yes, in a limited edition, one that I could control absolutely and should dispose of in such way as to beget a gnawing envy in every other bibliomaniac's bosom, and at the same time pander to that spirit of malice within me which properly delights in making fellow collectors and contemporaneous bibliophiles supremely, hopelessly miserable!"

"It would be a good idea," quoth I, inspired by my generous friend's enthusiasm; "it would be a good idea, would it not, to print an edition limited to fifty copies only? Fancy, if you can, the scrambling there would be among our brethren, — the heart-burnings, the yearnings, the repinings!"

"Yes, an edition of fifty copies! Yet," and here the prospective publisher made solemn pause, "yet — what — what should I do with them? I cannot go into the trade; it would seem like profanation to sell them!"

"You are quite right," I answered, "but you should profit by the illustrious example of our friend, Mr. B. T. Cable, who having bought a copy of the first American Burns, knew no peace until he had purchased the only

But, good old friend, I charge thee well,
Watch thou my brother all the while,
Lest some fair Lydia cast her spell
Round him unschooled in female guile.
Those damsels have no charms for me;
Guard thou that brother,— I'll guard thee!

And, lo, sweet friend! behold this cup,
Round which the garlands interwine;
With Massic it is foaming up,
And we would drink to thee and thine.
And of the draught thou shalt partake,
Who lov'st us for our father's sake.

Hark you! from yonder Sabine farm
Echo the songs of long ago,
With power to soothe and grace to charm
What ills humanity may know;
With that sweet music in the air,
'T is Love and Summer everywhere.

The evil planets have combined
To make the weather hot and hotter ;
By parboiled streams the shepherd dreams
Vainly of ice-cream soda-water.
And meanwhile you, defying heat,
With patriotic ardor ponder
On what old Rome essays at home,
And what her heathen do out yonder.
Mæcenas, no such vain alarm
Disturbs the quiet of this farm !

God in His providence obscures
The goal beyond this vale of sorrow,
And smiles at men in pity when
They seek to penetrate the morrow.
With faith that all is for the best,
Let 's bear what burdens are presented,
That we shall say, let come what may,
“We die, as we have lived, contented !
Ours is to-day ; God's is the rest, —
He doth ordain who knoweth best.”



CHLORIS PROPERLY REBUKED.

CHLORIS, my friend, I pray you your misconduct to forswear ;

The wife of poor old Ibycus should have
more *savoir faire*.

A woman at your time of life, and drawing near death's
door,

Should not play with the girly girls, and think she's
en rapport.

What's good enough for Pholoe you cannot well essay ;
Your daughter very properly courts the *jeunesse
dorée*, —

A Thyiad, who, when timbrel beats, cannot her joy
restrain,

But plays the kid, and laughs and giggles *à l'Américaine*.



TO THE FOUNTAIN OF BANDUSIA.



FOUNTAIN of Bandusia !

Whence crystal waters flow,
With garlands gay and wine I 'll pay
The sacrifice I owe ;
A sportive kid with budding horns
I have, whose crimson blood
Anon shall dye and sanctify
Thy cool and babbling flood.

O fountain of Bandusia !
The Dog-star's hateful spell
No evil brings into the springs
That from thy bosom well ;



TO THE FOUNTAIN OF BANDUSIA.



FOUNTAIN of Bandusia ! more glittering than
glass,

And worthy of the pleasant wine and toasts
that freely pass ;

More worthy of the flowers with which thou modestly
art hid,

To-morrow willing hands shall sacrifice to thee a kid.

In vain the glory of the brow where proudly swell
above

The growing horns, significant of battle and of love ;
For in thy honor he shall die, — the offspring of the
herd, —

And with his crimson life-blood thy cold waters shall be
stirred.



THE PREFERENCE DECLARED.

BOY, I detest the Persian pomp ;
I hate those linden-bark devices ;
And as for roses, holy Moses !
They can't be got at living prices !
Myrtle is good enough for us, —
For *you*, as bearer of my flagon ;
For *me*, supine beneath this vine,
Doing my best to get a jag on !

Now, you yourself, Mæcenas, are enjoying this beatitude ;
If by no brighter beauty Ilium fell, you 've cause for
gratitude.

A certain Phryne keeps me on the rack with lovers
numerous ;

This is the artful hussy's neat conception of the humorous !

Though Pontic pine,
The noble daughter of a far-famed wood,
You boast your lineage and title good,—
A useless line !

The sailor there
In painted sterns no reassurance finds ;
Unless you owe derision to the winds,
Beware — beware !

My grief erewhile,
But now my care — my longing ! shun the seas
That flow between the gleaming Cyclades,
Each shining isle.

A last night comes alike to all ;
One path we all must tread,
'Through sore disease or stormy seas
Or fields with corpses red.
Whate'er our deeds, that pathway leads
To regions of the dead.

SHADE.

The fickle twin Illyrian gales
O'erwhelmed me on the wave ;
But you that live, I pray you give
My bleaching bones a grave !
Oh, then when cruel tempests rage
You all unharmed shall be ;
Jove's mighty hand shall guard by land
And Neptune's on the sea.
Perchance you fear to do what may
Bring evil to your race ?
Oh, rather fear that like me here
You 'll lack a burial place.

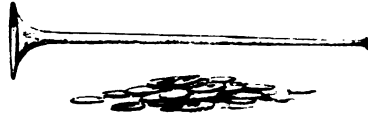


TO HIS BOOK.



YOU vain, self-conscious little book,
Companion of my happy days,
How eagerly you seem to look
For wider fields to spread your lays ;
My desk and locks cannot contain you,
Nor blush of modesty restrain you.

Well, then, begone, fool that thou art !
But do not come to me and cry,
When critics strike you to the heart :
“Oh, wretched little book am I !”
You know I tried to educate you
To shun the fate that must await you.



FAME *vs.* RICHES.



THE Greeks had genius, — 't was a gift
The Muse vouchsafed in glorious measure ;
The boon of Fame they made their aim
And prized above all worldly treasure.

But *we*, — how do we train *our* youth?
Not in the arts that are immortal,
But in the greed for gains that speed
From him who stands at Death's dark portal.

Ah, when this slavish love of gold
Once binds the soul in greasy fetters,
How prostrate lies, — how droops and dies
The great, the noble cause of letters !

Neither shall Eurus, wanton bold,
Nor feverish drought distress us,
But he that compasseth heat and cold
Shall temper them both to bless us.

There no vandal foot has trod,
And the pirate hordes that wander
Shall never profane the sacred sod
Of those beautiful isles out yonder.

Never a spell shall blight our vines
Nor Sirius blaze above us,
But you and I shall drink our wines
And sing to the loved that love us.

So come with me where Fortune smiles
And the gods invite devotion,—
Oh, come with me to the Happy Isles
In the haze of that far-off ocean!

Yet must that flood so terrible be sailed by mortals all,
Whether perchance we may be kings and live in royal
hall,

Or lowly peasants struggling long with poverty and
dearth,

Still must we cross who live upon the favors of the
earth.

And all in vain from bloody war and contest we are
free,

And from the waves that hoarsely break upon the Adrian
Sea ;

For our frail bodies all in vain our helpless terror
grows

In gloomy autumn seasons, when the baneful south wind
blows.

Alas ! the black Cocytus, wandering to the world below,
That languid river to behold we of this earth must go ;
To see the grim Danaides, that miserable race,
And Sisyphus of Aeolus, condemned to endless chase.



TO MISTRESS PYRRHA.

I.

WHAT perfumed, posie-dizened sirrah,
With smiles for diet,
Clasps you, O fair but faithless Pyrrha,
On the quiet?
For whom do you bind up your tresses,
As spun-gold yellow, —
Meshes that go with your caresses,
To snare a fellow?

How will he rail at fate capricious,
And curse you duly,
Yet now he deems your wiles delicious, —
You perfect, truly!



TO MISTRESS PYRRHA.

II.

WHAT dainty boy with sweet perfumes bedewed
Has lavished kisses, Pyrrha, in the cave?
For whom amid the roses, many-hued,
Do you bind back your tresses' yellow wave?

How oft will he deplore your fickle whim,
And wonder at the storm and roughening deeps,
Who now enjoys you, all in all to him,
And dreams of you, whose only thoughts he keeps.

Wretched are they to whom you seem so fair; —
That I escaped the storms, the gods be praised!
My dripping garments, offered with a prayer,
Stand as a tablet to the sea-god raised.

While this great Roman empire stands and gods protect
our fanes,

Mankind with grateful hearts shall tell the story
How one most lowly born upon the parched Apulian plains
First raised the native lyric muse to glory.

Assume, revered Melpomene, the proud estate I've won,
And, with thine own dear hand the meed supplying,
Bind thou about the forehead of thy celebrated son
The Delphic laurel-wreath of fame undying!

You ask what means this grand display,
This festive throng and goodly diet?
Well, since you 're bound to have your way,
I don't mind telling, on the quiet.

'T is April 13, as you know,
A day and month devote to Venus,
Whereon was born, some years ago,
My very worthy friend, Mæcenas.

Nay, pay no heed to Telephus;
Your friends agree he does n't love you.
The way he flirts convinces us
He really is not worthy of you.

Aurora's son, unhappy lad!
You know the fate that overtook him?
And Pegasus a rider had,—
I say he *had*, before he shook him!



TO PHYLLIS.

II.



SWEET Phyllis, I have here a jar of old and
precious wine,

The years which mark its coming from the
Alban hills are nine,

And in the garden parsley, too, for wreathing garlands
fair,

And ivy in profusion to bind up your shining hair.

Now smiles the house with silver ; the altar, laurel-bound,
Longs with the sacrificial blood of lambs to drip around ;
The company is hurrying, boys and maidens with the
rest ;

The flames are flickering as they whirl the dark smoke
on their crest.



TO CHLOE.

II.



CHLOE, you shun me like a hind
That, seeking vainly for her mother,
Hears danger in each breath of wind,
And wildly darts this way and t' other ;

Whether the breezes sway the wood
Or lizards scuttle through the brambles,
She starts, and off, as though pursued,
The foolish, frightened creature scrambles.

But, Chloe, you're no infant thing
That should esteem a man an ogre ;
Let go your mother's apron-string
And pin your faith upon a toga !



VI.

A PARAPHRASE, BY CHAUCER.

SYN that you, C'hloe, to your moder sticken,
Maketh all ye yonge bacheloures full sicken;
Like as a lyttel deere you ben y-hiding
Whenas come lovers with theyre pityse chiding.
Sothly it ben faire to give up your moder
For to beare swete company with some oder;
Your moder ben well enow so farre shee goeth,
But that ben not farre enow, God knoweth;
Wherefore it ben sayed that foolysh ladyes
That marrye not shall leade an aype in Hadys;
But all that do with gode men wed full quicklye
When that they be on dead go to ye seints full sickerly.

HORACE.

'T is now the Thracian Chloe whose accomplishments
inthrall me, —

So sweet in modulations, such a mistress of the lyre.
In truth the fates, however terrible, could not appall me ;
If they would spare her, sweet my soul, I gladly
would expire.

LYDIA.

And now the son of Ornytus, young Calais, inflames me
With mutual, restless passion and an all-consuming fire ;
And if the fates, however dread, would spare the youth
who claims me,
Not only once would I face death, but gladly twice
expire.

HORACE.

What if our early love returns to prove we were mistaken
And bind with brazen yoke the twain, to part, ah !
nevermore ?

What if the charming Chloe of the golden locks be shaken
And slighted Lydia again glide through the open door ?



THE ROASTING OF LYDIA.

NO more your needed rest at night
By ribald youth is troubled ;
No more your windows, fastened tight,
Yield to their knocks redoubled.

No longer you may hear them cry,
“Why art thou, Lydia, lying
In heavy sleep till morn is nigh,
While I, your love, am dying?”

Grown old and faded you bewail
The rake's insulting sally,
While round your home the Thracian gale
Storms through the lonely alley.



TO GLYCERA.

THE cruel mother of the Loves,
And other Powers offended,
Have stirred my heart, where newly roves
The passion that was ended.

'T is Glycera, to boldness prone,
Whose radiant beauty fires me ;
While fairer than the Parian stone
Her dazzling face inspires me.

And on from Cyprus Venus speeds,
Forbidding — ah ! the pity —
The Scythian lays, the Parthian meeds,
And such irrelevant ditty.



TO LYDIA.

I.

WHEN, Lydia, you (once fond and true,
But now grown cold and supercilious)
Praise Telly's charms of neck and arms —
Well, by the dog! it makes me bilious!

Then with despite my cheeks wax white,
My doddering brain gets weak and giddy,
My eyes o'erflow with tears which show
That passion melts my vitals, Liddy!

Deny, false jade, your escapade,
And, lo! your wounded shoulders show it!
No manly spark left such a mark —
Leastwise he surely was no poet!



TO LYDIA.

II.

WHEN praising Telephus you sing
His rosy neck and waxen arms,
Forgetful of the pangs that wring
This heart for my neglected charms,

Soft down my cheek the tear-drop flows,
My color comes and goes the while,
And my rebellious liver glows,
And fiercely swells with laboring bile.

Perchance yon silly, passionate youth,
Distempered by the fumes of wine,
Has marred your shoulder with his tooth,
Or scarred those rosy lips of thine.



TO QUINTIUS HIRPINUS.



O Scythian and Cantabrian plots
Pay them no heed, O Quintius !
So long as we
From care are free,
Vexations cannot cinch us.

Unwrinkled youth and grace, forsooth,
Speed hand in hand together ;
The songs we sing
In time of spring
Are hushed in wintry weather.

Why, even flow'rs change with the hours,
And the moon has divers phases ;



WINE, WOMEN, AND SONG.



VARUS mine,
Plant thou the vine
Within this kindly soil of Tibur;
Nor temporal woes,
Nor spiritual, knows
The man who 's a discreet imbiber.
For who doth croak
Of being broke,
Or who of warfare, after drinking?
With bowl atween us,
Of smiling Venus
And Bacchus shall we sing, I 'm thinking.

With smilax wreath my flagon's nozzle,
Then all day long,
With mirth and song,
Shall I enjoy a quiet sozzle !

Necessity precedes thee in thy way ;
Hope fawns on thee, and Honor, too, is seen
Dancing attendance with obsequious mien ;
But with what coward and abject dismay
The faithless crowd and treacherous wantons fly
When once their jars of luscious wine run dry,—
Such ingrates they !

Fortune, I call on thee to bless
Our king, — our Cæsar girt for foreign wars !
Help him to heal these fratricidal scars
That speak degenerate shame and wickedness ;
And forge anew our impious spears and swords,
Wherewith we may against barbarian hordes
Our Past redress !

TO MOTHER VENUS.

You 'll find young Paullus passing fair,
Modest, refined, and tony ;
Go, now, incite the favored wight !
With Venus for a crony
He 'll outshine all at feast and ball
And conversazione !

Then shall that godlike nose of thine
With perfumes be requited,
And then shall prance in Salian dance
The girls and boys delighted,
And while the lute blends with the flute
Shall tender loves be plighted.

But as for me, as you can see,
I 'm getting old and spiteful.
I have no mind to female kind,
That once I deemed delightful ;
No more brim up the festive cup
That sent me home at night full.